

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS

Claim 1 (Currently Amended) A data distribution system including an information service center and terminal equipment remote from the information service center and adapted for distributing a program selected at the terminal equipment from the information service center to the terminal equipment, the information service center comprising:

storage means for storing a plurality of programs;

retrieving means for retrieving a desired program selected at the terminal equipment from the plurality of programs stored in the storage means;

dividing means for dividing the desired program retrieved by the retrieving means into an outline part for informing a user of an outline of the desired program and into a supplement part recombinaable with the outline part for restoring the desired program, wherein the outline part is of a lower quality than the desired program; and

transmission means for transmitting the outline part

first followed by the supplement part to the terminal equipment; and

the terminal equipment comprising:

receiving means for receiving the outline part first followed by the supplement part of the desired program transmitted from the information service center;

a storage device;

recombining means for recombining the outline part and the supplement part to restore the desired program while the supplement part is being received by the receiving means after the reception of the outline part is completed and for storing the restored program in the storage device while the supplement part is being received; and

reproducing means for reproducing the lower quality outline part while the lower quality outline part is being received and for continuing the reproduction of the lower quality outline part while the supplement part is being received until the reproduction of the lower quality outline part is completed, thereby monitoring the desired program while the recombining means restores the desired program.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented). The data distribution system as set forth in claim 1, wherein the desired program includes audio data; and the dividing means comprises:

audio data dividing means for dividing the audio data into a plurality of bands having different respective frequency components; and

encoding means for encoding a frequency component of each of the bands resulting from a division of the audio data by the audio data dividing means by allocating a quantization bit to each one of the frequency components for masking a quantum noise, for providing as the outline part an output corresponding to a first band of the plurality of bands, and for providing as the supplement part an output corresponding to a second band of the plurality of bands.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented). The data distribution system as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

the desired program includes audio data; and

the dividing means generates a first output through addition of a plurality of channels for the audio data and a second output through subtraction of the plurality of channels, for providing one of the first output and the second output as the outline part and a remaining output as the supplement part.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented) The data distribution system as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

the desired program includes audio data; and

the dividing means comprises frequency component dividing means for dividing frequency components of the audio data into an

even spectrum and an odd spectrum for providing one of the even spectrum and the odd spectrum as the outline part and an other spectrum as the supplement part.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented). The data distribution system as set forth in claim 1, wherein:

the desired program includes audio data; and

the data dividing means divides the audio data into vocal data and accompaniment data for providing one of the vocal data and the accompaniment data as the outline part remaining data as the supplement part.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented). The data distribution system as set forth in claim 1, wherein, when the supplement part from the information service center begins downloading into the terminal equipment, the outline part is continuously reproduced for monitoring by the user.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented). The data distribution system as set forth in claim 1, wherein reproduction of the outline part at the terminal equipment for monitoring is not counted for billing.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented). The data distribution system as set forth in claim 1, wherein the information service center transmits to the terminal equipment the supplement part

including additional lock data for a predetermined billing and receives from the terminal equipment key data corresponding to the additional lock data, thereby permitting reproduction of the supplement part at the terminal equipment.

Claims 9-23 (Canceled).

Claim 24 (Currently Amended). A method of distributing a program between an information service center and terminal equipment remote from the information service center, comprising the steps of:

dividing a desired program selected at the terminal equipment into an outline part for informing a user of an outline of the desired program and into a supplement part recombina- ble with the outline part for restoring the desired program, wherein the outline part is of a lower quality than the desired program;

transmitting the outline part first followed by the supplement part to the terminal equipment;

receiving at the terminal equipment the outline part first followed by the supplement part of the desired program distributed from the information service center;

recombining the outline part and the supplement part to restore the desired program while the supplement part is being received after the reception of the outline part is completed;

storing the restored program while the supplement part is being received; and

reproducing the lower quality outline part while the lower quality outline part is being received and for continuing the reproduction of the lower quality outline part while the supplement part is being received until the reproduction of the lower quality outline part is completed, thereby monitoring the desired program while the desired program is being restored.